631 powers to his vassals, the province chiefs, who in turn entrust them to the canton chiefs, and these do likewise with the village chiefs. Thus, when a native wants to move from one canton to another, or 631 even from one village to another, he must be authorized to do so. 166 He must request the permission of the canton or village chief to settle 425 in such-and-such a place, and the chief of the village where he wants to live tells him where he may build his huts and which field he may cultivate. The naba may dispossess one of his subjects, if he so wishes, and give his field to another. After all, he "has the strength." This rarely happens, however, and a native who has cleared a piece of bush, fertilized a plot to sow maize, sowed and weeded the ground, is usually assured of a harvest, except in case of war. If a man is evicted, on the other hand, there is no appeal; neither the canton chief nor the province chief would listen to him; they would do the same thing if the opportunity arose.

421 There is no communal property. Every individual works his fields for his own account; he himself collects the fruit of his labor and remains its undisputed master. Nevertheless, every native owes his 651 chiefs and benefactors a tithe; and at harvest time it is interesting 431 to watch everyone sorting ears of maize, braiding sorghum stems, and measuring out baskets of small millet. The village chief is to get so many ears of maize; the canton chief, if he does not reside too far away, so many others; the father- or fathers-in-law will get theirs, and so will one friend or another to whom one owes cowries, or who has previously granted a favor. However, everyone who deals out goods right and left will in turn get some from various other people and approximately regain his expenditure. The village chiefs offer more sizable gifts to the canton chiefs, and the latter do likewise to the province chiefs.

651 These were, in fact, taxes, not fixed taxes per capita, but com- 661 pletely arbitrary ones. If the naba found a gift insufficient, he had no compunction about saying so, and the person involved had to comply. It is said that the naba of Koupéla paid annually 500,000 cowries (500 francs) and /23/ three horses to the naba of Bélousa, and a million cowries (1000 francs) in two installments to the Moro Naba, to whom he also gave five horses. The gifts to the Moro Naba were brought first to the naba of Bélousa and from there conveyed to Ouagadougou: ever the hierarchy.

This quasi-official tax, however, was not the only one. Whenever the Moro Naba wanted horses, cattle, or anything whatever, he

5: Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1959
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13. Economic Change and Mossi Acculturation

Some five thousand Mossi from the kingdom of Yatenga in the Upper Volta have been resettled on the newly developed lands of the Niger Irrigation Project in the French Sudan. Removed from a cultural setting which has been relatively undisturbed by the influence of European civilization, they are required to adapt themselves rapidly to an economic situation structured and directed by Europeans. Economic organization being the variable involved, a study of their adjustment provides an opportunity to examine some of the cultural problems and processes related to economic development in underdeveloped areas.

Yatenga is the northernmost of four Mossi kingdoms located in the Upper Volta. It is a sub-Saharan savanna land of red earth, low rainfall, gently rolling plains, and low hills. Ouahigouya, the capital, gives its name to the French administrative unit, the Cercle de Ouahigouya, which has governed the kingdom from its headquarters in this ancient city since its conquest in 1895.[1]

To distinguish themselves from the people of the neighboring kingdoms of Ouagadougou, Fada-N'Gourma, and Tenkodogo, the Mossi of the Yatenga sometimes speak of themselves as "Yadise" (those of Yadiga). This name refers to the fact that they regard themselves as being descended, as a nation, from Naba Yadiga, the half-mythical warrior-prince from Oaugadougou who broke away from his father's dynasty to form the separate political entity, Yatenga, which bears his name (*ya* for "Yadiga" and *tenga* for "country"). The Mossi have not always been numerically and culturally dominant in the Yatenga, as they are today. They recognize that their ancestors came from the south, from Mamprusi and Dagomba in the northern territories of Ghana.

Highly organized politico-religious states representing the cultural amalgamation of native and foreign populations and institutions are characteristic of the Voltaic region of West Africa. Acknowledging that we "owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes are

[1] Capitaine Noire, *Monographie du Cercle de Ouahigouya* (Ouahigouya, 1904), p. 15.

10:Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1964 FA28 Mossi FA28

4. The importance of sibling-in-law joking as a means of regulating conflict in the Mossi marriage relationship is further substantiated by the results of comparative research conducted among the Mossi resettled at the Office du Niger in the neighboring Republic of Mali.

The Mossi, who were first forcibly and later voluntarily resettled in Mali, were allocated farm land as elementary family units without regard for their extended kinship affiliations. Thus a man often found himself living in unaccustomed "isolation," in the company only of his wife or wives and children, and otherwise surrounded by total strangers. Although the potential for conflict in the marriage relationship remained high, or was even augmented by the stresses of adjusting to a changed milieu, sibling-in-law joking, the institution through which such tension is traditionally regulated among the Mossi, was no longer operative. Unless the younger siblings of each spouse had accompanied them to the resettlement area, those individuals were absent to whom they might have communicated their grievances and expressed their aggressive sentiments in a socially harmless, psychologically satisfactory, and culturally acceptable way.

As the traditionally sanctioned means of dealing with tension resulting from marital conflict was no longer available to the Mossi resettled in Mali, there occurred an increase in the incidence both of violence in marital disputes and of separation and divorce.

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